

**but you don't
even like me**

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Summary:

Just a short fluff-piece. These two, y'all.

1. but you don't even like me

About ten minutes after Eddie had fucked off, Richie finally gave up on the idea of getting to talk to Bill alone. Giving a grudging goodbye to his best friend, Bev, and Ben, he began to stalk through the tall grass towards the fence where they had all ditched their bikes.

As the bikes of the remaining Losers Club members came into sight, Richie hesitated. A slight figure was huddled on the ground beside the fence. The hair pricked up on Richie's neck as he walked slowly closer, squinting at the figure through his oversized glasses.

Eventually the figure came clearer into view and Richie heaved a sigh of relief. It was just Eddie. Arms folded around his legs, head on his knees. He was the only member of the Losers Club not to have biked to the meeting spot. Since, according to the man himself, biking with a broken arm was a statistic waiting to happen.

“What’s crackin Eds?” Richie called, causing Eddie to turn towards him. The perpetual frown on Eddie’s face deepened as Richie came closer, now only a few feet away from him. After a beat of silence, Richie continued. “Shouldn’t you be halfway home by now?”

A shrug. Richie bent to the ground and picked up a small rock.

“Heck, if I was in your position, I’d already be home.” Richie sighed, tossing the rock up in the air and catching it with ease. “Nothing like the sweet sight of Mrs. K to relieve the heebie-jeebies, ain’t that right Eds?”

“Fuck off Trashmouth,” Eddie spat bitterly, avoiding Richie’s gaze.

“Geez Eds, I’m just having a laugh.”

Eddie’s voice was softer when he replied. Less bitter, more sad. “Well, could you just have a fucking laugh somewhere else then?”

Richie looked down at the rock in the palm, rolling it between his fingers before hucking it over the chain link fence. Had it been another day, or another person, Richie might have remarked on just

how far he had managed to throw the rock. But on this day, with this person, he wiped his gravelly hand on his shorts and sank down to the floor beside his friend.

He bumped his shoulder gently against Eddie's, causing the boy to turn and look at him, "Hey, what's up Doc?" Richie asked quietly. "Have you already forgotten that we were just celebrating the kicking of some major monster ass?"

The frown on Eddie's face deepened, and he hesitated before replying. "That's the thing. We kicked major monster ass and I'm still afraid to go home and face my mom." His gaze slipped from Richie's and turned back towards his scuffed sneakers, "How can someone help kill a fucking demon and still be such a pussy?"

"C'mon Eds, let's get real here. I would rather face down Pennywise again, all by my lonesome, then face Mrs. K when she's on the goddamn warpath."

This got a snort out of Eddie, his frown briefly lifting into one of his rare grins. Richie knocked his shoulder softly into Eddie's again before standing up. He turned towards Eddie, still folded in on himself, and held out his hand.

"Why don't we walk home together Eds? Your place is on the way to mine - and if by the time we get to yours, you still don't wanna go home, we can just have a sleepover or something." At Eddie's raised eyebrows, Richie hastily continued. "My parents won't care, scout's honour. For some reason they think you are a, quote un quote, good influence on me"

Eddie rolled his eyes as he grabbed Richie's bloody hand with his own. With a decidedly exaggerated huff, Richie pulled him up and they walked over towards the bikes. If their hands stayed in contact for a little longer than was considered strictly normal, neither one mentioned it.

The two boys were well on their way home before Eddie spoke again. Richie had been talking nonsense the entire time, trying to fill the

silence with any comments he could think of.

“So who all was still there when you left?”

Richie stopped walking and, turning towards Eddie, put his on hands on his chest and leaned backwards as if he was going to faint. “OH LAWKES, it speaks.”

“Says the person who can never shut the fuck up”

“Now, now, let’s not be rude Eds,” Richie tutted, as he began to walk again. “After you left, Bill and Bev started giving each other googly eyes up the wazoo, so I decided to skedaddle out of there.”

“But Ben stayed?”

“Well you know Ben.” Richie shrugged, “He wants to mack on Bev so hard he can barely see straight. I bet he’s only just started to get the hint that three’s a crowd.”

Eddie’s brows furrowed, his hands tightening into fists. “Why does everyone have the hots for Bev? I mean, she’s pretty and all. But is she that pretty?”

“I dunno Eds. Bill and Ben seem to think so.”

“Do you think so?” Eddie pressed on, glancing over towards Richie, who was now starting straight ahead.

“Not really.” He turned to Eddie, who had raised his eyebrows in slight surprise. “I mean, she’s okay I guess. But I’d rather just hang out with you, y’know?”

Richie turned away from Eddie, and fixed his gaze on the road ahead. He stared so hard that it took him several seconds to realize that the smaller boy had stopped walking and was now standing several yards behind him.

“What Eds?” He groaned, pulling to a stop.

“You’d rather hang out with me than Bev?” The question was loaded with doubt.

“... Well, yeah?”

“But, but you don’t even like me.”

A moment passed where neither of the boys spoke. Richie’s mouth opened and closed several times, but no words came out, causing Eddie’s eyes to widen in confusion. Few people had the power to render Richie Tozier speechless. Eddie Kasprak was not supposed to be one of them.

“I don’t...Wait, what? You don’t, you don’t think I like you?” Richie’s voice came out like a squeak. “Wh-why would you think that?”

Eddie stared down at his shoes, “Well, you never give me a break. You’re always shitting on me.” He took a deep breath before looking up at Richie, “It kinda just seems like you only hang out with me because you have to, you know?”

Richie swallowed the laugh in his throat when he saw Eddie’s careful expression. “Eds, I make fun of you BECAUSE I like you.”

“You don’t make fun of the other Losers nearly as often. And you like them.”

“Yeah, well, I don’t like them nearly as much as I like you.”

Eddie gave an annoyed snort and began to fold in on himself again, expression becoming more guarded. “Stop fucking around Trashmouth, I was being serious.”

Richie’s bike dropped to the ground as the taller boy let go of it, putting his hand in his pockets and moseying over to Eddie, whose face remained intentionally blank. Richie stared at his feet briefly, squinting his eyes in concentration. The only sound on the street was the slight wheeze in Eddie’s breathing.

“Look Eds, remember how Bill and I told you that we got separated? And I got locked in that room with It?”

Eddie nodded and glanced at his cast, a souvenir from that memorable night.

“Well, what we didn’t tell you is how we got separated. I got like lured away or whatever by - by...” Richie took a breath and looked up, taking in Eddie’s now curious expression. “It – It was pretending to be you, Eds. It knew that I would come after you.”

A furrowing of brows. “Huh?”

“Not – not Bev, not Stan, not even Bill.” Richie ran a hand through his hair, his other hand fidgeting slightly by his side. “It was you.”

“Oh.”

Richie pulled his gaze from Eddie’s, whose expression was softening into something unrecognizable. A blush ran up onto Richie’s cheeks, and he felt a strong need to fill the silence, which felt overly heavy from the weight of what he had just said. “Now, bucko, whaddya say we –“

“I’d go after you too, Richie.” Eddie’s words sliced through the Richie’s voice, stopping his ramblings in their tracks. “I always would.”

Richie’s eyes widened, his hands continuing to fidget nervously as if they had a life of their own. “Cool,” He muttered quietly, before turning around and picking up his bike from where it had been dropped unceremoniously on the ground. With a shake of his floppy hair, his trademark grin returned and he turned back to Eddie. “Right then, ol chap. We best keep on moving, shan’t we? Wouldn’t want to get stuck out here when night falls. Not with you being a cripple and all.”

“Ugh, fuck off Trashmouth, I am not a cripple.” Came the grumpy reply as Eddie caught up to Richie, their footsteps slowly falling into unison. “That night really sucked dick though, huh?”

“You can say that again Squirt.” Richie whistled, “Definitely on my list of worst nights ever. It probably only comes second to that time when the Bowers gang left a dump in my backpack. That one was just a doozie.”

Eddie snorted. “Well at least you didn’t get your arm broken and then

have it get even more fucked up by some wackjob who thinks he can play surgeon.”

“Hey now! What I lack in technical skills, I more than make up for in my bedside manner.”

“Whatever you say Richie.”

As Richie regaled Eddie with stories of how he could woo over any patient with just a single glance, the grim looking Kasprak house came into view at the end of the street. The boys’ steps got slower and slower.

Once they reached the edge of the house’s overgrown front lawn, Richie turned to Eddie with a cocked eyebrow. “What’re you thinking Eddie Spaghetti? The offer still stands.”

Eddie squinted his eyes as he stared at the crumbling old house. A light was on in one of the rooms, dimly lighting up the entire building with a foreboding glow. He heaved a sigh before turning to Richie and smiling, “I think I’ll just stay here tonight. Gotta face her sometime, right?”

Richie placed his hand on Eddie’s shoulder, squeezing lightly before raising his other hand in the air, gesturing to the stars, “From this day on, let no man call my Eddie Kaspbrak a pussy - for never before has the town of Derry encountered such a hero.”

Eddie giggled before shoving Richie off him and starting towards the front gate of the house. Before he could get far, Richie’s hand grabbed his arm.

“Eds, do you – now that we’re all done killing monsters and saving the world and shit, do you think we could go get ice cream tomorrow?” Richie asked, his eyes landing everywhere but on Eddie’s face.

When Richie’s gaze finally landed on Eddie, he saw a grin that could have powered all of Derry for the next year. “Sure thing Trashmouth.”

2. you're gonna have to save me

It was just past 3 pm and Richie Tozier was sitting on the curb in front of the Aladdin Theatre. He was waiting on one Eddie Kasprak, who, for the first time that Richie could remember, hadn't arrived on time. Whenever the two of them met up, it was always Richie who was running late, having left his house with good intentions and getting distracted on the way into town. Eddie would always be sitting on the curb, arms crossed in a huff across his chest, by the time Richie arrived.

But Richie had steeled himself against distractions this afternoon. He had even managed to walk past Greta Bowie crashing into a garbage can on her roller-skates without stopping to comment. For some reason, he knew that he didn't want to be late today. A sentiment which Eddie didn't seem to share, given that it was 3:10 pm and Richie was still sitting by himself on the curb.

Beginning to get bored, Richie let his mind wander to why Eddie might be late. Maybe Mrs. K had finally made good on her promise to padlock her son in his bedroom. Maybe he had had an another asthma attack. Or, worst of all, maybe he had just forgotten about their plans.

Richie dug his fingernails into his palm, the sharp pain providing a welcome distraction from his thoughts. A scab had begun to form over Bill's cut the night before and Richie was exceptionally proud of the fact that he hadn't already re-opened the wound, resisting temptation having never been one of his strong suits.

Richie was beginning to contemplate giving in and just ripping off the scab. His callused fingers ran over his sweaty palm, the pebbled, itchy scab screaming to be picked at.

“Stop picking at it, dipshit.”

A voice brought Richie out of his daze. Twisting around on the curb, he found himself looking up into the gleaming eyes of Eddie Kasprak, his mouth turned up in a smirk.

“I couldn’t help it, Eddie Spaghetti.” Richie began to wail, bringing his hand up to his forehead as if to faint. “I was feeling abandoned and my nerves, my poor, poor nerves! You know what they do to me.”

Eddie moved to sit down beside Richie on the curb, their knees knocking together playfully. “Your hand looks fucking disgusting by the way.”

“What! But I haven’t even picked at it yet, see?” Richie demanded, shoving his hand into Eddie’s face, the smaller boy twisting away with a look of disgust.

“God dammit Trashmouth. There’s this thing we do here in America, it’s called washing our hands. Have you heard of it?”

“No, but I have heard of jerking off.” Richie began to twirl his hands, putting on a thick, vaguely Eastern European accent “You should try it sometime. Might relieve some of the... unresolved anger issues I’m witnessing here.”

At this, Richie was promptly shoved.

“Yes, yes, clearly unresolved.”

Eddie fought back a smile as Richie pulled himself back up to sitting. “You know Richie, people used to believe that jerking off all the time caused poor vision. When did you get those glasses again?”

“Funny you should say that, Eds, I think I got them like a week after seeing your mom in a bra for the first time.” Richie widened his eyes, “Do you think there’s a connection?”

“No. But I do think I just vomited in my mouth a bit.”

“Well, you know what the remedy for that is right?”

“Some new fucking friends?”

Richie shook his head and stood up from the curb, wiping his hands on the front of his khaki shorts. He turned and shot Eddie a grin before heading in the direction of Gifford’s Ice Cream Shop, a Derry

institution.

“So why were you late Eds?” Richie asked as Eddie caught up with him, knocking gently into his shoulder, “Don’t you know it’s bad manners to keep a gal waiting?”

Eddie scoffed, colour rising into his cheeks. “You’re late like every single time we hang out!”

“Well, yeah. But I always at least have an interesting reason behind why.”

“Seeing Henry Bowers fall on his face doesn’t count as interesting, Richie.”

“Interesting is relative, Eds.” When Eddie laughed but didn’t reply, Richie continued. “So, no reason then? Just trying to keep me on my toes?” His voice raised in pitch, his hands clutched to his heart. “Will he come? Won’t he come?”

“That’s it, that’s the reason. You caught me out, Trashmouth.” Eddie deadpanned as they came to the entrance of Gifford’s. The two boys slipped into the shop, which was packed with sweaty and grouchy citizens of Derry, all vying for a way to relieve the heat.

Eddie got straight into line, ready to order his typical single scoop of vanilla. As per usual, Richie stood entranced in front of the display case, trying to decide what new flavour to try this time.

By the time Richie had decided on his flavour, Eddie was already waiting by the door, cone in hand.

“What the fuck is that?” he asked as Richie approached, lapping enthusiastically at his monstrosity of an ice cream cone.

“It’s a double scoop of Fly Fishing Fudge, obviously.” Richie jeered as the two boys stepped out of the shop and back into the heavy air of summertime Derry. “It’s got... M&Ms, cookie dough, and chocolate chunks.”

“It looks like diabetes took a shit in a cone.”

“And that’s what it tastes like Eds, delicious, shitty diabetes.” Richie took a large lick of his ice cream and patted his stomach, letting out an exaggerated moan of pleasure.

“You sound like you’re fucking jerking off, you dickwad.” Eddie grunted, grumpily licking at his ice cream as he turned in the direction of Bassey Park.

“And how would you know that, Eddie Spaghetti? Have you listened to me jerk off?” As Eddie’s jaw dropped, Richie pressed on, “I mean, I thought I was being so subtle at our sleepovers.”

Eddie stopped in his tracks.

“WHAT?”

Richie turned around to look at his friend, whose face was turning a shade of beet red. He shrugged helplessly, “I mean, haven’t you noticed how sticky everything in my bedroom is whenever you leave in the morning?”

“That’s... that’s so fucking disgusting, Richie. Oh my GOD.”

“Take it easy, Eds. I’m just fucking with you. I mean – there’s probably some residual jizz somewhere in my room -” A twitch from Eddie. “ - but I do not jerk off at our sleepovers, no matter how cute you are when you snore. Scout’s honour.” Richie brought his free hand up to his head in mock salute.

Eddie hesitated momentarily, before rolling his eyes and walking up to Richie. As he came within a foot of the taller boy, he held up his casted arm and poked a finger against his friend’s chest.

“I. Do. Not. Snore.” He muttered, punctuating each word with a poke to Richie’s chest.

Richie held up his hands in mock surrender, “I plead the fifth, your honour.”

Instead of replying, Eddie just laughed and shouldered his way past Richie, the entrance to Bassey Park now only a few yards away.

Having gotten his ice cream much earlier, and in a much more modest amount, than Richie, Eddie's small vanilla cone was finished by the time the two boys entered the park. Out of the corner of his eye, Richie could see his friend throwing jealous glances at the still huge amount of ice cream left in his hand. Without hesitation, he flung his arm out in front of Eddie, waving the ice cream in his face.

“Fancy some Fly Fishing Fudge, Eds?”

“And get diabetes? No fucking thanks.”

“C'mon Eddie Spaghetti, you'll love it, I promise.”

There was a pause before Eddie replied this time, “Maybe I'll get it next time we're there.”

What went unsaid was that Eddie didn't want Richie's germs, a fact which made Richie clench his free hand slightly, fingers digging into his scab. He ignored the pain and continued.

“C'mon Eds, I promise I don't have AIDS.” Eddie let out a quiet huff of laughter, and the pain in Richie's hand began to subside. “Besides, I can't have you being scared of my spit. Cause if I ever get taken down into the sewers, and get put into some wacko trance à la Bev, I'm expecting a kiss from you to wake me up.”

“You'd want me to kiss you?”

“We've already been over this, Eds. I like you the most.” Richie sighed, “That means you'd have to kiss me.”

Instead of replying, Eddie reached out and grabbed the ice cream cone.

It turned out that Eddie liked Fly Fishing Fudge. Liked it so much, in fact, that Richie had to wrestle the last remnants of the cone away from him by the time they got to their favourite spot in the park. The spot was slightly protected from view, just off the path and down the sloping grass towards the canal. A large elm tree protected it from the sun.

Richie and Eddie took up their usual places upon arriving at the tree -

Eddie sitting with knees pulled up to his chest, Richie lying on his back just to the side of him.

A moment passed where neither boy said anything. Other children could be heard laughing in the distance, a woman somewhere down the path was singing to herself.

It was Eddie who broke the silence, “I was late because my mom wanted to have a talk with me.”

The hesitation in Eddie’s voice made Richie think twice before replying. Instead of cracking a joke, or putting on a voice, he twisted around on the grass so that he was facing his friend. “A talk about what?”

“Like, girls and shit.”

Richie scrunched up his nose, glasses tilting up his face. “Wait, what? Ew. Why?”

“I dunno, cause she thought that I was meeting up with one or something,” Eddie muttered, before raising his voice to mimic his mother, “Eddie, you’re getting to an age where you’re going to start noticing the opposite sex. Eddie, you need to be careful.”

“Jesus. She must be the only person in this town who thinks you’re actually capable of getting any.”

Several blades of grass were promptly thrown at Richie’s face. A single blade of grass found its way into his mouth, causing him to sputter incoherently while Eddie giggled triumphantly.

After fishing the guilty blade out of his mouth, Richie reflected back on what Eddie had just said. “Wait? Why would you she think you were meeting a girl?” He placed his hand on his chest and gasped in mock outrage, “Has Mrs. K forgotten about me? Does she think Richie is a GIRL’S NAME?”

“Fuck off, Trashmouth. She said it was the way I was acting or something.” Eddie shrugged, pointedly avoiding Richie’s gaze. “Whatever, she’s fucking delusional anyways. It doesn’t matter.”

There was something in his statement that went unsaid. Something that Richie couldn't quite put his finger on. Whatever it was, it made him uneasy. He returned to lying on his back, trying to think of a way to relieve the feeling as the sound of blades of grass being pulled out of the ground sounded in his ear.

An idea came to him.

He let out a sudden, heaving gasp, and, clutching at his shirt, began to roll fitfully on the ground. "Eds! Eds! Something – something's caught me,"

"You are such an idiot, Trashmouth."

With a jerk, Richie grabbed onto Eddie's shirt, his friend yelping in surprise. "C'mon Eds, I think" he gasped, "I think it might be the clown. You're – you're gonna have to save me."

"Oh my god, why are you - " Before Eddie could finish his sentence, Richie let go of his shirt, dropping his arm limply to his side. "This is so not funny."

Richie didn't reply. Instead, he lay weakly on the ground – arms by his side, eyes staring blankly at the sky. The only movement was the rise and dip of his chest with each shallow breath.

"Can you just get the fuck up, you idiot," Eddie hissed, shoving Richie lightly with both hands.

Again, nothing. Richie focused hard on trying not to blink, or letting a laugh escape from his screwed shut mouth. Out of the corner of his eye, he could see Eddie looking around, scanning the park nervously.

"God dammit, Trashmouth." Before Richie could prepare himself, Eddie was leaning forward, pressing his closed lips firmly against Richie's. The kiss was short and a little bit sticky from the leftover ice cream on their lips. Richie couldn't help but wonder what he was supposed to do with his hands, which were lying awkwardly by his sides.

A sigh left Richie's lips just as Eddie broke the kiss. Feeling the heat rising in his face, Richie turned to his friend with wide eyes, noting

with a sense of relief that Eddie had also broken out in a blush. Despite his red face, Eddie still managed to tilt his chin defiantly, “There, dipshit, I saved you.”

Richie propped himself up on his elbows and slapped a large grin on his face, ignoring the warm feeling spreading through his belly. “Would this be a good time then to tell you that I actually do have AIDS?”

“You’re fucking insane.”

3. do you mind?

Summary for the Chapter:

Alright folks! Here is the final chapter of this lil saga.

Two months to the day since the the blood oath, Richie Tozier found himself sitting on a ragged sleeping bag in Bill Denborough's bedroom. To his left lay Eddie's sleeping bag, colour faded from so many turns in the washing machine.

At the foot of both their sleeping bags stood Bill's bed. And on top of that sat the other two other original members of the Loser's Club, Stan enthusiastically explaining his bird book while Bill nodded along, his smile strained at the corners.

It was almost like things were all back to normal.

Richie looked down at his fingers, which were pulling haphazardly at loose threads on the sleeping bag. His hands always seemed to have destruction on their mind.

Just as Stan was dissecting his unexplainable sighting of the calliope hummingbird in the Barrens, Richie heard the bedroom door behind him quickly open and close. Soft footsteps led to Eddie sitting down next to him. A minty smell wafted off of him, confirming that he had just been brushing his teeth.

“Chompers all good to go Eds?”

“How you still have all your teeth fucking beats me.” Eddie grumbled, pulling his knees up under his chin. “You eat more crap than Ben’s mom.”

“Did my little Eddie Spaghetti just make a joke at a mother’s expense?” Richie gasped, bringing a hand up to his forehead and pretending to swoon, “My boy’s growing up so fast.”

“No thanks to your shitty ass parenting, Trashmouth.”

Richie brought his hand to Eddie's cheek and pinched it jovially,

“Ohhh, is someone being a little grumpster.”

Instead of biting back a reply, a blush began to spread across Eddie’s face. It took a moment for Richie to realize that his hand was still resting on his friend’s cheek. Heat began to spread up his chest before he hastily brought his hand down, shoving it in his lap.

The two friends hadn’t discussed the events that happened in Bassey Park the day after the blood oath. Richie had wanted to bring it up, he really had. But for once in his life he had been at a loss for words.

How do you ask a friend if they kissed you as a joke, or if they had actually wanted to? It’s not an easy conversation to start.

Silence continued to hang between the two boys, Stan’s soft voice continuing enthusiastically in the background. Just as Eddie began to open his mouth, Richie crumpled a piece of paper into a ball and hucked it at his friends on the bed.

The two boys turned, wide eyed, to Richie as Eddie clamped his mouth shut.

“Stanley Uris,” Richie yelped, “Can you please stop boring poor ol’ Bill to death?”

“What? I’m not boring him. He likes this stuff!”

“Stanley, look at the man.” Richie proclaimed, gesturing towards Bill’s glazed over eyes, “He’s gonna kick the bucket any second.”

As Stan turned towards Bill, the leader of the Loser’s Club shook his head as if awakening from a deep slumber.

“N-n-no, it’s...” Bill began to stammer, looking around desperately as if trying to find words that he had lost in his bedroom. “i-i-it’s really cool Stan” he trailed off pathetically.

Next to Richie, Eddie began to shake slightly with laughter. “No offense Bill, don’t become an actor.”

“He actually means a lot of offence Billy,” added Richie, shoving Eddie gently “That was a terrible performance.”

Bill rolled his eyes as Stan slid off the bed, bird book in hand. He placed the book carefully on Bill's desk before settling down on his meticulously ironed sleeping bag.

Just as Bill began to resettle himself on his bed, getting under the covers, Richie lifted up a finger and pointed on his friend.

"Don't you dare get under those covers Big Bill. We have adventures to go on."

"I-it's three am, Tr-tr-trasmouth."

"Exactly! The night is still young! Adventure is calling!"

"No way," Eddie huffed, "I just brushed my teeth."

At this, Richie gave an exaggerated roll of his eyes. "C'mon, Eds. Did you break your balls or your arm at Neibolt?"

"I dunno Rich. My memories a little fuzzy from having my arm RE-BROKEN."

"Oh, that's not from your arm. That's from the AIDS."

That comment garnered a laugh from Bill, a groan from Stan, and a shove from Eddie.

"Now fellas," Richie instinctively boomed, quickly recovering from the shove "Enough with all this chit chat, it's time to get up and go into the great outdoors."

"Beep beep Richie." Stan muttered.

"Oh c'mon Stanley, where's your sense of adventure?"

"It's tired," Stan bit back.

Richie turned to Bill, and then Eddie, "Guys?" When both boys looked at their feet, he shook his head morosely and began to wiggle into his sleeping bag. "I need some new fucking friends."

"You're welcome to leave anytime, Trashmouth." Eddie muttered, as

jumped into his own sleeping bag and turned to face Richie.

“And leave you heartbroken, Eds? Never.”

Eddie’s eyebrows raised into his hairline. Richie locked eyes with him and smirked, gaining a small smile in return just as Bill quietly spoke up from his bed.

“D-Do you guys think Bev’s g-g-gonna forget about us?”

“I dunno Big Bill. Murderous clowns are pretty fucking forgettable if you ask me,” Richie drawled, still locking eyes with a now giggling Eddie.

“I g-g-guess. But I’m h-h-having a harder time re-re-remembering things. And she’s n-not even in De-Derry anymore.”

“Hasn’t she already sent you like a million postcards?” Eddie asked, turning towards Bill.

“Y-y-yeah but – “

“Then she’s not going to forget you. No one has that much to say about high school.”

“I don’t know about that, try having Richie for a lab partner,” Stan grumbled from his corner.

“Always trashing the Trashmouth, Stanley.” tutted Richie, propping himself up on his elbows to look at flushed Bill, “Besides Big Bill, she can’t forget you. You’ve shared a kiss. Fuck, you’re her first kiss. She’s stuck with the goddamn memory of you until she dies.”

Bill huffed a laugh and ran a hand through his hair, “Th-thanks Richie.”

“Anytime, my good sir.”

As the leader of the Loser’s Club went to turn off his bedside lamp, Richie lay back down on his side and was faced with the person who had been his own first kiss. Eddie was staring awkwardly at the floor, pointedly avoiding Richie’s gaze, and the taller boy could feel a

heavy weight settle in his stomach.

The light clicked off.

Richie could hear the other Losers saying goodnight, but he didn't say anything. Instead he pitched his glasses to the side of the room, closed his eyes and got lost in a tornado of thoughts.

Did Eddie regret it? Being stuck with a fucking Trashmouth as his first kiss for the rest of his god damn life? It would be understandable.

Nobody wanted the memory of a bucktoothed, pale, bug eyed kid for a first kiss. Especially not one who couldn't keep his fucking foot out of his mouth for more than thirty seconds at a time.

As Richie lay there, stuck in his head, the other Losers began to fall asleep. After some time, the only sound in the room was the soft snoring from Stan's corner.

Richie turned over to face Eddie, who was nothing more than a blur to his glassless eyes. He listened for the sound of Bill's murmuring, a tell tale sign that their leader was asleep, before poking his friend.

“Eds.” He whispered, “Eds.”

“Mrmpfff.”

“Are you awake?”

“Well I am now, dipshit.” Eddie grumbled quietly.

“Okay, cool.”

A pause.

“Please tell me you woke me up for a reason.”

“I did. I did. I wanted to talk about... about stuff.”

“Stuff?”

“Yeah, stuff”

“Okay.”

Another pause.

“God dammit Trashmouth, what fucking stuff?” Eddie hissed. Through the blur, Richie thought he could see Eddie’s hand rubbing angrily at his temple.

Richie sat up again on his elbows, and quickly surveyed the room with squinting eyes.

“Let’s go outside.”

“Outside?!”

“Outside. Fresh air’s good for... stuff” Richie grumbled, leaning to the side to grab his glasses and shove them on his face. He quietly got out of his sleeping bag and left the room. He could feel Eddie following him, annoyed but now fully awake. They silently wandered down the stairs and then out the back door, settling on the top step of the Denborough household’s back porch.

Eddie blew a hair out of his face before turning to Richie.

“We’re outside now. What the fuck do you want to talk about?”

Richie took a deep breath, and dove in.

“Do you mind?”

“Mind what?” came the confused reply.

“That I was your first kiss.”

Eddie stiffened, and Richie immediately wanted to take back what he said. But before he could say anything, Eddie squinted his eyes and opened his mouth, “Who the fuck says you were my first kiss?”

“Your own mom doesn’t count Eds.”

“Oh fuck off Trashmouth.” Eddie rolled his eyes, bumping shoulders good naturedly with the fidgeting Richie.

Richie could feel his fingers itching to move, and begrudgingly let them tear at the loose threads of his pajama pants. “I just – you’re mine, you know.” A small intake of breath to his left. “Am I... yours?”

“Yeah.” Eddie quietly mumbled.

“And do you mind?”

Eddie’s eyes widened. “Why would I mind?”

“Well, you’re stuck with me now. I’m always going to be your first kiss. And I’m... I’m fucking Trashmouth.”

Richie’s fingers continued to pull anxiously at the threads as Eddie’s eyebrows furrowed. “So? I wouldn’t have kissed you if I minded. I’d have left you to fucking die in Bassey Park”

Richie’s fingers stilled.

“Really?”

“Yes, really. Do you know how many fucking germs are exchanged in a kiss? Do you really think I’d kiss a disgusting shithead like you if I didn’t want to?”

Richie closed his eyes and heaved a giant sigh of relief. Opening his eyes, he was faced with a panic stricken Eddie looking back at him.

“Wait, but. If you thought I minded – do, do you mind? Because I know I’m not the greatest at – “

Before Eddie could say another word, Richie dove in for a kiss. It was a softer kiss than their first one. Determined to make it better than before, Richie placed his hand on Eddie’s face, gently stroking his friend’s cheek with his thumb.

When Richie pulled away, Eddie caught his lips in another kiss, a grin taking over his face. As Eddie leaned back, he quickly nuzzled his nose against Richie’s.

Instinctively, Richie put an arm around his friend and pulled him

close, nestling his nose into his Eddie's hair.

"Well, looks like you're stuck with me, Eds."

Eddie huffed a laugh, "It's okay, I don't mind."